Thistle and Weeds

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Thistle and Weeds

by gypsiangel

Summary

Spare me your judgements and spare me your dreams, cause recently mine have been tearing my seams

Notes

:D Welcome to my brain, it's not really all that sunny right now and I've been listening to too many horror podcasts to shut it all out. This shouldn't be too very long, but it's a good cathartic exercise when dealing with coworkers with no soul. Cheers!
Oh, and the title of this is from the Mumford and Sons song of the same name, which partly inspired me.

Chapter 1

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Spinning, down, down, down… Spinning and falling and it's sickening and fast and he wanted to stop. Stop. Please, stop the spinning. Stop. The. Spinning. If he could feel his stomach, he would be sick from it. He wished it was dark. Darkness, his old friend had been replaced by bursts of blinding white and yellow. Orange was in there too, as was red. It was like fire, only not hot. It was cold, so very cold in this downward spin. All sound had been replaced by a hollow rushing in his ears, a whoosh, whoosh, whoosh that sounded like his heart in his ears when he tried to sleep and the rhythm kept him just on the edge of that reprieve. He shouldn't have been able to see anything.

"Will, what have you done?" *The question sounded just as hollow and rushing, the words a familiar coolness that he wished would just say his name again, only with more than the mediocre sigh of emotion.*

There was a touch, a stroke of strong fingers across his face and the spinning slowed. It didn't stop, but it was enough for him to move his own arm, lift his own hand. Fingers grasped and he was anchored. Lips touched his forehead, the crisp scent of expensive cologne touched his nose and he heard the voice again, calling him back, "Will, I want you to come back to me." *The taste of liquid copper in his mouth, swimming up from his lungs, from his stomach. He coughed and it* hurt*. He swallowed.* "That's right, sweet Will. Shhh… Everything is going to be all right now, I have you."

The blackness started at the edges, the blessed shadows taking over the damnable light until it was bearable again. It soothed and warmed and came through him like a balm. Fingers stroked his hair, running across his scalp in a way he hadn't felt since he was a very small boy. It made him think of that point in time, that innocent and too brief period when he had a home and a family and a love that felt so thick it didn't seem possible for it to ever fade out. More of the hot liquid rushed into his mouth, exploding over his tongue and staining his teeth. He kept swallowing out of pure instinct and the dim thought that he might drown if he didn't.

Everything slowed. Whoosh, whoosh, wh….whoosh. The lights were dimming, becoming more bearable. There was a sound of weeping, of inconsolable grief, then the other voice came through again and it was all he could focus on, "Sleep, now, my friend. When you wake, there is much to do."

He had no choice but to follow the command and go into the beautiful, empty blackness.

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“Jack, you need to come out to Wolf Trap.” Jack Crawford looked groggily over at the red numbers on the bedside clock and wanted to groan at the sight. Three-thirty in the morning. He had just barely laid his head down at one. The tone of Alana Bloom’s voice kept him from snapping at the usually soft spoken psychiatrist. She sounded like she’d been crying and there was a note of frightened horror that made his heart do a leap in his chest. Wolf Trap. Will.

“What happened?” He was already pushing the blankets down and swinging his legs over the side of the bed. Bella was out of town for a conference in Delaware, so he didn’t have to worry about stealth.

“There’s…” her voice broke and he froze in the act of reaching for his watch. “There… I don’t know what happened. There’s a lot of blood and… and I can’t find him. The dogs are gone. I don’t know if he took them with him, or someone hurt them when they… Oh, God, Jack. This is my fault. This is all my fault.”

He blinked, “Alana, slow down. Why are you out there so late? Start from the beginning and tell me.”

“I- I got a strange call from Will earlier, probably around eight. I was in the middle of dinner with… with a colleague and I let it go to voicemail. I for- forgot about it until I was going to bed around midnight and I listened to it. Oh, God.” She sounded like she was going to vomit or break down completely. “You need to get out here as soon as possible. It’s pretty-,” her voice cut off in a gasp, then there was a muffled shuffling and a short scream, then the sound of her phone being dropped.

“Alana!” Jack shouted, moving quickly now to put on the clothes he hadn’t taken the time to put in the laundry when he’d undressed a couple hours before. “Alana!”

There was a sick squelching sound and Jack felt his stomach twist painfully. The line went dead.

He called the Wolf Trap PD on his way out the door, and his own crew when he was pulling out onto the freeway to take him to Will’s farmhouse. He didn’t want to be alone when he faced whatever waited for him. For the first time in a very long time, Jack Crawford was scared shitless.

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“That’s it, love,” the voice coaxed him back to waking. Everything felt strange; hot and cold, bight and dark, calm and panicked. He knew the voice above him and he knew the combined smell of crisp cologne and light floral perfume.

“Hannibal?” His voice was thick and strangled, barely recognizable as his own. His throat was dry and his mouth tasted awful, like heavy copper and something… horribly foreign, as if he’d bitten his cheek while he slept and didn’t spit. His body ached as he moved, just a little, his muscles protesting violently. There was something weird about his face, it felt strangely numb.

“Easy, easy,” Hannibal said, his voice low and gentle. A cool hand stroked down his bare chest, running across his torso before slipping behind to support his back and pull him upright. He grunted at the effort, the pain lancing through him like a living thing. “I’ve got you.”

“What happened?” His eyes didn’t want to work even though he was trying to open them; it was so dark. Everything *hurt* and he was so thirsty it was like a burning thing in his throat and chest. A cool glass was set against his lips and he took an eager sip, nearly choking when it wasn’t water that flooded his mouth. Instinctively he swallowed, but turned his head to the side, weakly trying to open his eyes again to see what was going on around him. Nothing but blackness.

“Hannibal- what? *Jesus Christ*, what-?” He pushed at the hand trying to hold him still, familiar panic rising in his gut when he couldn’t break free. Why couldn’t he *see*? What the fuck happened to his eyes? Why couldn’t he open them?

“William, I need you to be still.” There was a note of command in his friend’s tone, a sharpness that made it near impossible for him to disobey. He fell quiet with a distressed sigh, limbs trembling with effort. “That’s a good boy. All your questions will be answered in due time.” The body holding his shifted and a damp cloth was drawn over Will’s face, leaving a clean, lemon scent behind. He could feel the phantom sensation, a hint of temperature, but he still couldn’t feel the actual touch of it against his skin. “You just need to trust me. Do you trust me, Will?”

Will’s breath hitched as the cloth traveled over his eyelids, the tender pressure almost too much for him to endure just at that point. He whispered, “What happened to my eyes, Hannibal?”

“Do you not remember?” Lips touched the skin on the corners, near his temple, the tip of a wet tongue teasing the raw flesh.

Shivering, he bit back a whimper. *Too much, it was too much. The small paring knife was just the right size in his hand, the handle slick with sweat as he drew it toward his face. His eyes were already closed, unable to look as he brought the blade toward the cursed orbs.* “I was…” Will swallowed hard against the horror of what he’d done. “Awake from a nightmare and it wasn’t going away. It never goes away. I see them everywhere, all the time. Blood on my hands, blood on the floor… blood in my head.” His words were coming faster and faster, images staring to flash through his head even though his eyes… *Fuck, his eyes*… He tried to bring his hands up toward his face, fingers curved into claws as he tried to touch what he imagined were the open, gaping holes.

Hannibal captured his arms, pinning them to the bed, his weight settling in a heavy line as he straddled Will's hips and leaned into his heaving torso. He heard Abbigail’s voice,

leaning over him and he could picture her face inches away, blood pouring from a wound at the side of her head, her neck ripped open and still gushing. *"How does it feel to be a victim, Will? Hurts, doesn't it?"*

"I'm sorry," he choked and didn't know who he was apologizing to. Abbigail? Hannibal? Himself? He turned his head to the side and felt the horror rise up in him like bile at the back of his throat. "I was supposed to die."

"I can't let you go so easily," Hannibal whispered into his ear and Will shuddered. "Don't worry, young one. I'll take care of it all. Soon you'll be good as new."

Will tried to shake his head, but was stopped by the firm weight of Hannibal's hand on the side of his face. "I want you to sleep now." He opened his mouth to cry out, body poised to struggle- to push and buck and at least *try*, but he felt so heavy. "Shh, that's my good boy, Will. Let go and sleep. I'll be here when you wake."

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Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

> So glad you guys like it! It's good to stretch the horror writing skills once in a while. ;)
> Thanks for the support!

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Alana came awake slowly in muted shades of black and gray. She could hear shuffling around, furtive movements that didn't sound all together human, but she couldn't tell exactly what it was. There wasn't any confusion, not really. She knew that she was in terrible trouble and that she was probably going to die. There was a moment of complete, irrational calm. She took as deep a breath as her aching ribs would allow and opened her eyes. The calm was shattered and replaced with a sickening terror that she didn't think she had ever felt before in her life.

Dying was okay. Everyone died eventually, be it in a tragic accident or just falling asleep and simply not waking up. This… This wasn't okay. She stared out at the windowless room that seemed to be covered in stainless steel from the cold table she was lying on. A quick tug told her that she wouldn't be moving her hands anytime soon, the metal cuffs biting into her delicate wrists. An experimental wiggle told her that her hips were similarly locked into place, as were her ankles. Her torso and head were free, not that it would do her much good. Lifting her head made it swim and her vision go wonky. The flesh of her neck pulled in a horrible way. It wasn't painful, it was more of a numbed sensation with a sticky, wet… slide. She couldn't really identify the feeling, not having endured anything quite like it before, except that it felt wrong. Swallowing hard against both the nausea and the scream that threatened to come up and choke her, she squeezed her eyes shut and allowed her head to fall back with a hollow thud that sent sharp pain shooting down her spine.

"Hello, Alana." She startled at the familiar voice, eyes flying open to peer into the face of a man she'd once let put his hands on her. His face was smiling gently, the lines around his eyes crinkling with tender charm, his lips curving in his usual thin smile. His eyes were a deep purple-red in the fluorescent light that hummed maddeningly overhead and she wondered where the warm honey tones had gone. Was this the real hue that had been covered up for so long? Or was she seeing things? It was entirely possible that she was hallucinating, a dim part of her not going bat shit insane with fear mused with her usual clinical thinking. *Ever the fucking psychiatrist, huh Bloom?*

"I wish I could offer you a genuine apology," her mentor, friend, and sometimes lover was saying now in that same gentle manner he always took with her. "But I realize that it

would be wasted, and to be completely honest, I believe you deserve the full scope of reality in this situation. Sugar coating has never been my style and I know that you are intelligent enough to realize when I am being insincere."

He stroked her cheek with a bare hand, a quick, soothing flick of his thumb across the curve of her skin, and then he moved to finish the task he had started before she started stirring. Turning her head to watch him arrange the glinting objects on the metal tray that looked suspiciously like something you'd see in an operating room at the hospital, she silently trembled as tears pooled and fell unchecked. He continued, "I hadn't exactly intended for our situation to escalate so quickly. Truly, this wasn't what I had intended for you at all. Don't get me wrong, dear one, I was still going to end your life. Just not in this… undignified manner. I had thought to give you to our William…" His voice trailed off and he looked wistful for a fleeting moment, imagining the scene he had fantasized about.

He sighed and glanced at her, lips quirking up again in a 'what can you do' kind of fucked up smile. *Oh, God. He's been hiding in plain sight all this time.* "And here I do have to admit fault," he said, moving a tiny inspection mirror a fraction of an inch to the right so that it was perfectly straight and aligned next to the scalpels and other surgery tools. "I hadn't realized the extent of torment Will was under. I was aware that self-harm was more than possible, it was in fact a surety with the level of psychosis the boy was experiencing. I just hadn't imagined he would carry it so far."

Alana's fear spiked at the mention of Will, the memory of his blood soaked bathroom flashing through her mind. Was he…? His face, tired and haggard but still achingly handsome replaced the vision, his smile heart melting despite the near manic tremble to his lips. His blue eyes had been dark the last time she'd seen him, nearing steel gray instead of shining ocean. *My fault. This is all my fault.* Guilt made her heart heavy and she squeezed her eyes shut again, turning her head toward the ceiling so that she couldn't see Hannibal's movements.

"I had thought to sacrifice Uncle Jack for this cause, his death not carrying the potential that yours held," her fellow therapist mused and she jolted when he touched her arm, the caress incredibly light yet so potent that every nerve was on fire with awareness. "I very much wanted a more traditional setting for you, Alana. Candlelight and wine, sweet touches and, I admit, a rather base and carnal atmosphere. I had desired to watch my boy take you in the manner you both had been aching for, wait until you were at the height of pleasure before he took your life into himself so he could live. There is unimaginable poetry in the theatrical, one that I'm afraid you wouldn't quite understand given the circumstances. I have a deep love of the romantic notions and gestures."

"You're insane," Alana whispered finally, her voice so light as to be barely a breath of sound. She didn't open her eyes again, even when she felt him lean over her.

"I can understand where you could come to that conclusion." The reply was patronizing and so incredibly… pitying… that Alana couldn't help but reopen her eyes in disbelief, despite her intention not to. Hannibal's exotic, almond shaped eyes were hovering just above hers. "There, that's what I wanted to see. Jack Crawford is all wrong for what I need. His eyes are too dark, too large. Yours, pretty Alana, are nearly the right shade.

There was an… incident and Will has need of new eyes. I don't care for seeing him with brown irises, it just wouldn't be the same."

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There was no sign of Alana in the farmhouse, or the adjoining property. Jack stared in at the large bathroom on the second floor, his hands pressed to his hips with fingers gripping a little too hard. It looked like there had been a massacre in the old fashioned space, blood pooled and smeared across the black and white tiled floor, the painted metal sink and matching clawfoot tub, even the walls had trails of purple-black.

Although teeming with police and FBI personnel, the place was eerily quiet. It was as if there was a sound barrier around the property. It made Jack cold in a particular way that he couldn't easily define. It was more than just the bare fact that two of the people he worked the closest with were missing, leaving a scene right out of a slasher flick. It was more than the fact that he had pushed Will Graham to this… whatever this was. It was more than his own miserable failings as a superior and as a friend. He just couldn't put words to it without sounding fucking insane.

He felt more than heard Beverly Katz join him in the narrow doorway, her silent steps swallowed by the worn carpet runner that covered the scarred hardwood. "We're not finding anything." Her usually warm voice was subdued and grim. "All of this is nothing if we can't find Will or Dr. Bloom. The dogs are gone too, not a thing missing other than them. All of their food bowls are still in the utility room, along with the buckets of kibble. All of Will's things are here. His service weapon is still in the locked drawer in the front hallway. Safety on and clip out. Wallet is on his nightstand with his watch and badge. Cell phone…"

"Is on the kitchen table," Jack finished for her instead of listening to her near monotone. He knew Katz and Will were friendly, that they had been known to hang out from time to time outside of Quantico. Things had been strained between them since the Angelmaker case. Jack had noticed, but hadn't paid it much mind. He'd had more important things to worry about.

"It looks like…"

"Has anyone called Dr. Lecter? It seems like he's the only one Will might have confided in if he…" Jack let his voice trail off into silence. Beverly's eyes were cold as she looked at him, her face uncharacteristically blank. He could almost hear her say it, though she knew better than to voice her thoughts. *You did this, you son of a bitch. He said no, that he couldn't do it and you pushed him with your guilt trips and fucking power trips. You. Did. This.*

"He's not answering. Called his home, office, and cell. No answer."

Jack didn't bother to bite back the oath, turning on his heel to storm downstairs even as he barked orders into the milling forensic specialists. Whatever they found wasn't going to do diddly squat toward finding their missing profiler and psychologist. He felt acid burning up into his esophagus and idly wished he had some kind of antacid on hand. "Katz, with me. We need to hit up Dr. Lecter's."

Beverly followed him silently, hands clenched into fists in the pocket of her jacket. *You dick. We tried to tell you. We fucking tried to tell you.*

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Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

> You guys rock so hard. :D Thanks for all the awesomeness. Just a quick warning, there's a hint of dub con mentioned here, but nothing hardcore graphic.

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She was staring at him. He was back in his bathroom, sitting leaned against the cabinet holding the sink, knees tucked up and hugged to his chest. Everything was clean, white, and smelling like bleach and laundry detergent. The rug in front of the bathtub was fresh out of the dryer and the shower curtain was brand new, a light blue that wasn't too harsh or bright in the soft light. Obviously someone had been thinking about how awful contrasting colors were on his migraines. He remembered it as being a cheap plastic thing that made sure his floor didn't get soaked. The bathroom looked nicer than it had in weeks. Her short, slender, jean clad legs were drawn up and her milky white arms were wrapped around them in a mirror of his own posture. She was leaning against the opposite wall, catty-corner from him. Her eyes were so blue and sad.

He looked away. He'd always had trouble looking people in the eyes, she hadn't been an exception to that rule. She still wasn't. "He's going to take my eyes, Will," she told him in that gentle way of hers, so soft it was like a balm to his ears despite the words. "It's okay, though. I want you to have them."

When he looked back up at her, he jolted at the bloodied, hollow mess under her eyebrows. Black holes gaped where there was supposed to be stunningly blue orbs. Crimson streaks dripped down the sweet curve of her cheeks, dripping down off her jawline and the tip of her chin. Her red, short sleeved shirt was soaked with blood and other fluid, the neckline drenched and marked.

He opened his mouth to shout, body unfurling as if to go to her, to try to help… but as he did, he saw his own hands covered in gore. The paring knife slipped from nerveless fingers, clattering to the soaked floor with a sickening plop. His jeans were red, the material saturated and sticky. He looked down at his chest, seeing the bare flesh slick and shining with… "Alana," he found himself whimpering when he wanted desperately to scream. His hands shook violently as he raised them to touch his own face. When they grazed his eyelids, everything went black.

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Even with a clean white bandage wrapped around his head, covering the upper part of his face, the young man in his bed was breathtaking. The changes were already taking place and Hannibal's lips twitched in a tender smile as his eyes ran over the bare chest and legs exposed to the warm air. He moved the candle closer and rested it on the nightstand. Even after living with the modern convenience of electricity for so many decades, he still sometimes preferred the softer candlelight.

Will hadn't had much color to him to begin with, his natural skin shade being a couple ticks below cream. Now he was nearly luminescent, his body stretched out before Hannibal like perfect marble. His creation. The courtship hadn't lasted as long as he had imagined, but that was all right. His patience had been a thing of beauty in itself, the ability to watch and wait paying off. Of course, he'd enjoyed the game while it lasted, falling in love with the young profiler along the way.

Some would argue about the love, might call it unhealthy obsession. They had no idea how rare Will Graham really was. The brilliance of his mind could possibly be recreated, the physical beauty of course could be found in a multitude of men, and the pure empathy… well, that could be found again as well, though it was much harder to find than a person could imagine. No, it was all of those things combined, plus an elusive something else that made Will so damnably hard to get out of his head.

There was a smell to him, beyond the brain fever, beyond the horridness of the cheap cologne, beyond even his basic musky male scent. It was something in his blood, a rare combination of *other* that spoke of a heritage that wasn't entirely human.

When he had noticed it, Will had been in his office for one of their late visits and he'd suddenly bent forward almost violently in his chair, hand going over his nose and mouth and the thick scent of blood filled the air. Hannibal hadn't been prepared for the surge of pure hunger that had nearly overtaken his good sense. An intense dose of lust had mixed with it, making it even harder to tamp it down where such things belonged. It took longer than usual for him to force his body to calmly gather the handkerchief out of his pocket, wet it down with cool water from the bathroom, and press it to his pseudo-patient's gushing nose.

Will had apologized profusely, humiliated by his body's perceived betrayal. Hannibal had coolly reassured him and asked the expected questions. *Does this happen often? Do you have a history of bloody noses? Well, dear Will, since the answer to both is no, I would say that this is a product of stress and not taking care of yourself. You were saying that you haven't been sleeping well? Yes, let me give you something to allow you to sleep, it should help.* Normal. Everything was normal. When the appointment was over and Will was safely on his way back to his home and dogs, Hannibal had brought the ruined silk to his nose and mouth and inhaled deep of the essence that would haunt him for weeks.

It had been harder than it should have been for him to refrain from taking more. A slip of a paper through unprepared fingers, slicing deep through tender flesh. A well-timed movement on the steps that resulted in an unfortunate skinned knee and palm, all minor accidents that served to heighten his awareness of the potency of Will's blood. It had been agonizing and euphoric all at the same time.

Perching on the edge of the bed where Will was starting to softly whimper with distress, Hannibal stroked the clammy skin of the boy's forehead. It was almost time. He had left Alana in the basement room, hooked up to tubes and wires that ensured she would be complacent until he was ready. The low level sedative would be processed through her slight body mass soon after he stopped administering it, which was rather important. Once he was past the transformation, Will wouldn't be affected by chemical manmade drugs. However, Hannibal needed all tissues to be pristine in order to do the transplant successfully. Which meant bad things for Ms. Bloom.

The doctor smiled and pressed a kiss to Will's bowed lips, inhaling deep of the scent of fear, sweat, and copper. Face moving slightly, Will lifted his chin groggily, unwittingly accepting the gentle touch. Hannibal ran his tongue over the boy's lower lip and was rewarded with a gasp that allowed him access previously denied. Will tasted of sickness and despair, the sweetness of it curling through Hannibal like an aphrodisiac, aching desire coiling in his loins.

Even in a weakened state, Will's own body was reacting to its new master, responding to the blood link Hannibal had established when he'd saved the young man's life when he found him bleeding out in his bathroom. Not entirely lucid, Will was reaching for him, icy fingers gripping at Hannibal's forearms with a gentle strength that made his lips curve up again as he pulled away.

The low sound of distress Will made hastened Hannibal's movements as he removed the layers of his clothing, forcing him to leave them where they lay crumpled on the floor. When he rejoined his creation on the bed, he shuddered at the skin to skin contact. The thin blankets were pulled away, revealing a body slowly losing its humanity. Still retaining a blush of warmth, Will's chest heaved as he drew in a heavy breath. Stroking the rapidly growing hardness of the man under his power, Hannibal reveled in the lingering vulnerability. He wanted to experience the intimacy of this broken thing, this beautifully, irrevocably shattered human being before he was restructured into a better, more formidable vision. He wanted just this once while the heart still beat and the blood still moved through living veins; while the breath was still needed and fear was a very real and physical thing.

Lowering his head, Hannibal slowly brought their mouths together again. Will blindly gripped bare shoulders, ragged fingernails digging into cold skin. The sensual sting made Hannibal groan and nestle between Will's legs, the contact making the young man gasp, delirious with fever and a spiraling desire that had nothing to do with sanity and everything to do with a complete loss of control over self.

Fangs slipping down, Hannibal grazed Will's neck, not biting down but drawing the slightest tang of blood. He'd already taken more than he should have. Very, very soon he would have his chance to gorge himself on the delicacy that was William Graham. Anything more right now would hasten the progress of the infection and Hannibal wasn't ready for that just yet. The delicate balance much be achieved, and that meant restraint.

There was still time for playing while he waited.

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“Nothing.” Beverly stood just inside the foyer of Dr. Hannibal Lecter’s home, the emergency warrant to enter the domicile safely in her jacket pocket. She and Jack had both attempted to call the former surgeon on both cell phone and landlines at his residence and office with no luck. The bad feeling churning in her gut had overwhelmed her the moment she stepped onto the front veranda of the huge manor home. Lecter had been nowhere to be seen, his car not in the driveway. It had taken Jack exactly two hours to get a judge to issue a warrant on the basis of the good doctor’s close relationship with both the missing parties.

If she was really capable of feeling anything but fear and icy rage, Beverly would have been impressed with Jack’s imaginative and highly manipulative tactic. As it was, she had stood outside the black SUV she and Jack had arrived in, huddled against the bitter cold that was moving in rapidly and stared at the huge house that was far too extravagant for one person. There was a niggling suspicion that had been worming into her for a long time that Lecter wasn’t exactly what he appeared to be. She hadn’t liked how Will had changed since Jack had brought him into the Lithuanian’s orbit. Calling it care would be too much for Beverly to handle right at the moment.

Anyone paying attention over the last year would know that healthy was totally subjective when thinking about Will and Lecter’s relationship. Nauseous, Beverly looked around the immaculate home and wondered if anyone actually lived here at all. It was a far cry from her own one bedroom loft, which hit a couple notches above bohemian and several notches below sterile. “The doctor’s Bentley is in the garage. I don’t know if any of his personal belongings are missing, but it looks like he didn’t do any last minute packing. Either this is a really good decoy, or we have a third missing person to go on our list.”

Jack looked like he was about to lose his temper in a spectacular way. Not too bad at the profiling angle herself, Beverly knew that anger was her boss’s way of diverting other emotions that could get in the way of clear thinking. Anger was a much easier and cleaner outlet than guilt. She wondered if the position with the Los Angeles unit was still open. She had a sister and an aunt on the west coast that would let her set up for a couple months until she could get rerouted.

Her heart hurt. They weren’t going to find her friend, and if they did, he definitely wouldn’t be the same Will she’d known. She’d see this thing through, good or bad, but she couldn’t work for a man she didn’t respect. Jack had crossed a line, had used his own skillset to manipulate and systematically break a good man. Not that breaking their star profiler had been the end goal, of course, but he’d known it was a possibility.

She flashed back to the blood soaked bathroom in Wolf Trap and tasted bile. No, they weren’t going to find Will whole and in one piece.

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Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

:D And so it goes! Thank you guys for reading this.

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"Hush… that's right, Will. It's okay, I have you." Arousal, blinding and hot and painful, building like a ball of flame in his stomach and spine, the pleasure was so high that he didn't know what to do with it. Hands gripped him, fingers biting in and holding, firm and cold like iron; one wrapped bracingly over his hip, and another on the crook where his neck met his shoulder, using it as leverage to jerk him back and down as the engorged cock impaled him from behind, meeting him halfway with a maddening slap of skin on skin.

Breath coming out in gasps and whines, Will is lost in the sensation, wrapped up in what he knows to be Hannibal. It's in the smell and the taste and the sound*, all of it too much and not enough all at the same time. "Please," he hears the plea falling from his lips, and the angle of the penetration was changed. Sharper, deeper, fuller. He didn't think he could bear any more of it, but the rush of pain/ecstasy/ohmyfuckinggod is enough to cease all sound and movement and air. Body going rigid, all he could do was tremble and* feel*. The hand on his hip moved and wrapped around his weeping erection, slick with sweat and whatever sweet smelling oil Hannibal had used to open him up. The first languid stroke was out of time with the brutal thrusts and was enough to start him breathing again.*

Filthy words started falling out of his mouth and Will was pushed down into the pillows, his knees shoved apart as the assault on his prostate grew in violence, the hand stroking him going firm and hard and so fucking perfect. Higher and higher and higher he was pushed until everything shattered with bursts of white and gold lights where his eyes should be. The colors swirled and he didn't think he was ever going to be the same.

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Alana stared up at the white-blue of the fluorescent lights that hummed over her head, unfocused and hollow. How the fuck did she end up here, strapped down to a table in her *friend's* basement lab? The sedative he'd injected into her IV catheter was wearing off and her thoughts were starting to come back into order, though she thought idly that she was a little too calm for the situation. She heard a door open on well-oiled hinges and turned her face to watch expensively tailored black trousers appear down the stairs. He wasn't wearing his suit jacket, but the crisp mint green shirt was tucked in at his narrow waist and the black suspenders added that fashionable spin that she'd come to expect from him.

He had such an interesting face, she thought hazily as it came into better focus. Not quite handsome, but extremely attractive because of the unusual lilt to his features. There was mystery behind his stoic micro-expressions, a warmth when he turned up the charm. He was suddenly close enough to stroke her hair and she closed her eyes to it, allowing the familiar touch lull her a little more. When he pulled away, she tried to move her hand up to stop him, to grip his hand and keep it there with her a little longer. It was stopped by the metal band holding it to the table. Her heart slammed as she was reminded that she wasn't in his bed after a long night of taking comfort in physical release.

"Ah, there we go." His lips curved in a gentle smile and he flicked his thumb across her lips in a feather light brush. "Welcome back, dear Alana."

"Why are you doing this," she asked hoarsely, hating herself a little for the fear that made her voice shake. Everything was coming back now, her body tingling as it processed the last of the sedative. Trembling uncontrollably, she jerked her feet in the restraints, twisting her wrists against the sharp metal. She grit her teeth when it sliced in, the pain sharp and all too real.

He moved to the tray he had readied earlier, adjusting the already perfect alignment. "It'll be over soon," he assured her quietly, unbuttoning and rolling up his sleeves in slow, methodical precision. "Just a bit longer."

"You owe me an explanation, Hannibal!" Sudden anger made her voice sharp and he looked even more amused at her outburst. The skin around his eyes crinkled infuriatingly and she heard her teeth grind together as she added, "Please."

"Lovely one, I don't owe you anything." He pressed a kiss to her forehead, inhaling deep of the scent of fear, heartbreak, and betrayal nearly rolling off her soft skin. Then he turned and went back up the stairs.

She let out a frustrated shout, tugging uselessly at the restraints keeping her locked into place on the table. Tears stung her eyes and she tried to keep them back, failing miserably. A sob escaped despite her efforts and she nearly gagged on it.

It seemed like she lay there for a long time before she heard him return, his footsteps heavier on the stairs than the last time. Turning her head to watch him reappear, she saw why. He was carrying Will as one would a precious burden, cradled close to his chest, arms around his back and under his knees. She remembered what he had said earlier, when she'd first awakened in this den of horrors. *"There was an… incident and Will has need of new eyes."* Oh, God.

She watched as her friend was laid out on the bed only a couple feet away from her own. Where she was essentially lying on a metal slab that could be considered more of a modified autopsy table, Will was tucked into an immaculately made up hospital bed. He was dressed in a pair of loose pajama pants and nothing else, the material hanging low on his hips. He looked freshly bathed, his light brown curls damp in the dim light over his bed.

"Will?" she called softly and gasped when he turned his face toward her. Freshly shaved, he looked years younger than she knew him to be, his skin porcelain and perfect from

what she could see under the white bandage wrapped around his eye sockets. His mouth was pulled down into a pained frown as he tried to discern where her voice had come from and if it was real or a figment of his damaged psyche.

"Now, now, Alana," Hannibal murmured, coming back over her direction. "I don't want to upset Will any more than what is necessary." She jerked at her restraints when she saw the long, thick length of fabric he held in his hands. She let out a half-scream and felt her neck crack when she tried to shake her head enough to dislodge the gag as he slipped it between her teeth and around the back of her head, tying it in a tight knot.

"A-Alana?" Will whimpered, the noise just loud enough for her to hear it over the roaring of her heartbeat in her ears.

Hannibal shoved her head back down with a negligent force, enough to bounce her skull painfully against the metal. Pain shot down her spine and dark spots clouded her vision. She heard her *mentor/friend/lover/psychotic captor* move away again and turned her head to the side despite the dizzy nausea that swam up. Large, graceful hands cupped Will's face, stroking him as if he were a child as soothing and warm tones assured him that everything was all right.

"I- I heard Alana." Will's voice was weak and vulnerable, the tone so hopeful that it sent another spiral of despair through Alana's chest. "Hannibal? I heard her, i-is she all right? I didn't hurt her, did I?"

"Our Ms. Bloom is fine, dear Will," Hannibal assured him in a low rumble, rubbing his face along the side of Will's like a giant cat scenting a kitten. "I want you to sleep now, love. It won't be long before you're better than before."

Will's grip on Hannibal's wrists lessened and he slowly went limp, "I- Hannibal, please, tell me she's all right…"

"It was all a dream. Just a dream." Hannibal kissed his slack mouth and gently laid him back into the mattress. His eyes glinted as he turned to look at Alana. She squeezed her eyes shut and let her head ease back onto the table, trying to stop the sobs that were trying to choke her. All nerve endings going on high alert, she heard him step back up next to her.

"It will all be over soon," he repeated and she swallowed hard at the underlying anticipation she heard swimming through his voice. She heard the clink of metal against metal and a shriek froze in her throat.

"This might be a little cold, and I won't lie to you." Alana didn't open her eyes, but she felt the cold sting of antiseptic on the skin surrounding her sockets. "This will be very painful. I cannot risk something going wrong with the transplant. You do understand, don't you? I will make it as quick as possible. You were a good friend to Will, and to me. If only our dear one hadn't been so rash." He sighed and brushed a gloved hand over her forehead to push her hair back and away from her face.

She couldn't help the scream that erupted when the scalpel touched the sensitive lid of her right eye.

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"You need to stand down, Ms. Katz." Jack glared down at his technician, shoulders squared as he unconsciously tried to use his size to intimidate. Beverly glared at him furiously and reached for her ID, slapping it down on the autopsy table with a snarl. Next came her gun clip, the weapon making a heavy clanging sound as it hit the metal. Price and Zeller stared at the tableau uncomfortably, Price's mouth hanging open slightly in shock. In all the years they'd worked CSI together, they had never seen Beverly truly angry before.

Her tone was cold but unfailingly polite. "Fine. Consider this standing down. I refuse to work for someone I can't trust. I wish I could say it has been a pleasure to work for you, Agent Crawford. I wish you luck on all future endeavors. With permission, I would like to go gather my belongings from the lab and the locker rooms. If I need an escort, as is policy, I will wait in the hallway, if that is acceptable."

Jack's face went blank as he processed what was happening.

"I can be your escort, Bev," Zeller spoke up quietly, appropriately subdued. Jack turned a glare on him, opening his mouth to demand that the younger man stay exactly where he was. Until he saw the look in his eyes. They were all hurting over the disappearance of their friends. While the men hadn't shared the same friendship with the strange teacher/profiler, they'd accepted him as one of their own. Alana hadn't been as familiar, but she had been considered friendly enough for her to be missed. Jack had pushed Will to the literal breaking point, and now he had snarled and shoved their star technician into handing in her badge. The realization that he ran the risk of losing all of them was glaringly obvious.

"Look, I apologize," Jack said heavily after a long moment. He rubbed at his aching forehead and swallowed back the vitriol that wanted to spew out. He reigned in the impulse to scream at them all that he was doing the best he could, that he needed them to shut the fuck up and do their jobs so he could… so that *they* could find Will and Alana. He swallowed hard again. "Beverly, I need you. I know that things have been really intense and I haven't helped matters any. Please, stay until we find…"

"We're not going to find them, Jack," Beverly interrupted, her arms crossed defensively over her chest. Her black eyes sparked at him from across the room. Price shifted in place and looked away, hiding the emotion that flittered across his expressive face. "Lecter has deep recourses and is shifty enough to have a million get away plans in place. We're not going to find anything."

"Beverly," Jack started to continue the argument that had led them to this point. "We have no evidence pointing-"

"To hell with that," Beverly cut in again, shaking her head. "Open your eyes, Jack! He's not the friend you think he is! If you want me to stay until we find our people, I need to have free reign to pursue the avenue I feel is best. Keeping the blinders on isn't going to do us any favors. Do you trust me?"

Jack was silent for a full minute, then nodded resignedly. "Yes, I do trust you. Do what you need to. I'll bring in another team to go after other angles. You three work on

finding out everything you can about Dr. Lecter."

Beverly blinked back sudden tears and reached for her weapon and identification. Finally they were getting somewhere.

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